

Dodgy invoices found during alleged misconduct investigation of energy efficiency company

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Victorian Energy Upgrades

A matter involving an off-shore auditor's alleged manipulation of invoices will be referred to police after an investigation into alleged misconduct by a Victorian energy efficient lighting company.

The Essential Services Commission has issued a formal warning to Victorian-based Cyanergy following a five-month investigation prompted initially by a consumer complaint.

Commission chair Kate Symons says the breach involved the company unknowingly submitting falsified claims for \$620,000 worth of installations.

"The investigation started in December after a business owner called to report alleged misconduct by an installer from Cyanergy.

"The consumer was concerned when they tried to put up old inefficient lights to take photos prior to installing new LED lights," she said.

The complaint sparked a five-month investigation including a comprehensive audit of the company's claims from December 2018 to December 2019, along with site visits.

The investigation ramped up after initial queries uncovered a number of questionable invoices.

The investigation found the number of lights installed had been overstated and around 10 per cent of claimed certificates were therefore invalid. The company will now surrender around 20,000 certificates

valued* at around \$620,000 to 'make good' on the ineligible claims.

The company has since severed ties with the installer involved and overhauled its monitoring and auditing to ensure it complies with the standards required to participate in the program.

Ms Symons says the issue of the modified invoices and the overstatement of installed lights will now be referred to Victoria Police.

"During our investigation we uncovered a number of recycling company invoices which appeared to have been changed by an off-shore auditing company before being submitted to claim energy certificates.

"The commission also imposed conditions on the company's accreditation by requiring them to undertake independent audits," she said.

*Certificates have traded between \$30 and \$34 on the spot market over the last four weeks.

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